

REMARKS

This Reply to Final Office Action is responsive to the Final Office Action mailed on January 26, 2006. Claims 6, 8, 10, 13, 15, 21, 23, 25, 28 and 30 have been canceled and claims 31-36 have been added. As a result, claims 1-5, 7, 9, 11-12, 14, 16-20, 22, 24, 26-27, 29 and 31-36 are pending in the present application.

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-7, 11, 12, 14, 16-22, 26, 27 and 29 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,355,880 issued to Bateson et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,486,650 issued to Yetter.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 8-10, 13, 15, 23-25, 28 and 30 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

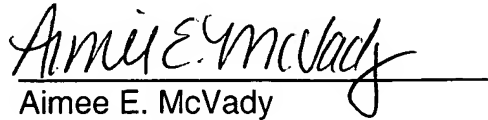
As such, Applicant has amended independent claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 8 and independent claim 16 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 23. As such, the applicant asserts that the examiner's rejection with respect to independent claims 1 and 16, and the claims that depend therefrom, is now moot.

Applicant has introduced new independent claims 31-36 rewriting original claims 10, 13, 15, 25, 28 and 30, respectively, in independent form.

In view of the above, Applicant submits that claims 1-5, 7, 9, 11-12, 14, 16-20, 22, 24, 26-27, 29 and 31-36 are allowable and favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 4/25/06


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